

Christianity and Crisis

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Christmas Hope and New Year Faith

THE "simple folk" of the world have not failed to catch the significance of Christmas. From their hearts have sprung the fancies that have woven about the birth of one of their own—a true son of the people—the loveliest stories that we know. Angels sing; a star leads; shepherds and wise men kneel; immortal hymns fall from the lips of Virgin Mother, of aged saints; and heaven and earth acknowledge the glory of the Day. As at the beginning, so down through the ages the simple folk have dreamed. The capon crows; the cherry tree bows; the oxen kneel; the northern tree and the southern saint gladden the hearts of the children; the waifs sing; the boar's head and the wassail bowl. All the inconsistencies of the human spirit—its child-like fancies, its hopes, its crudities and its noblest faiths come crowding before us as we listen, ears strained, for the heavenly song:

"Glory to God in the highest"

It is true that in these scientific and sceptical years "so fair a fancy few would weave." These wonders we can no longer create, and yet on Christmas Day there are few of us who would not, like Thomas Hardy, if one of the simple folk summoned us to see the miracle:

*"Go with him in the gloom
Hoping it might be so."*

For something marvelous has come to pass. A child is born who changes the course of history, whose domination of the Western world for fifteen hundred years was scarcely questioned, who is the very spring and fountain of those deep principles of human living which, challenged today, have called a hundred million men to arms.

Two of those principles stand out vividly in the hopes which cluster about Christmas. The first is freedom. The dignity and beauty of the common life demand it. They refuse oppression, defy want, deny fear. Here in this child of the people is what men are, what they mean to God. Will you enslave

Him, manacle Him, starve Him? You crucified Him once, but in vain. The common folk have seen aright. Here is their destiny. God "hath exalted them of low degree."

And the common folk have seen too that this freedom, this dignity and beauty belong to all men. Not peace in America, but peace on earth; not to men of good will who are white, Aryan, or exclusively American, but just men of good will. The wise men were no Jews. The legends take no thought of color. Race and nation erect no barriers. Each year at Christmas men dream of this one family of God. Each year the Church proclaims it. Each year every man of good will longs and prays that the angels' song may, as the children say, come true.

And now the New Year comes on apace. We must leave the dreams of Christmas whether we will or not. We must face the reality of a world at war. What are we Christians to do about it? The answer seems clear enough. We must transmute dreams into realities. We must transmute hope into faith. We must let the dreams drive us with the dynamic force of faith into action. Because being Christians we are realists; we shall not expect too much. But because being Christians we are idealists, we shall expect everything. That is what faith means.

Now the reason for all this exhortation lies at hand. The war finds its only justification for a Christian in two complementary facts: It is a war of liberation on the one hand and thus, on the other, opens the way to a peace which shall express the fundamental unity of men—"a worker's peace, a league of sober folk." It is these two things which Christians have to keep hammering into the consciousness of the "world." It is these two things which so many Christians keep forgetting all the time. "Remember Pearl Harbor," they shout; but "remember Pearl Harbor" means revenge, and revenge is no Christian motive. Pearl Harbor jolted us into the war but it is not the cause of the war.

It has little relation, save as a symbol, to the great issues for which we fight. In similar fashion the American way of life, an American Century, a free commerce, unhampered trade, or simply 'defending America' have meaning in the struggle but none of them expresses the issue. It is our business as Christians to think clearly and to think radically about it, to see clearly the great issues and the great goal. In some fashion the league of sober folk, that is, of honest, clear-thinking, unselfish people, must be created. Some sort of world order is essential or again the common man will have to wait to see his century dawn. Such order alone can realize even in the slightest degree the hopes which spring to life at Christmas time.

But thinking and hoping are not enough. All of us are ready to hope. A goodly number are ready to think (or are we?). Our business now is to act in faith, driven by faith, eager to give all that we can to the task.

It is no easy task. It is no matter of fancies. The problems of a durable peace are appallingly vast. They reach far beyond anything which faced the victors of 1918. The making of peace was then concerned almost entirely with European problems. It was for the most part in the hands of nations which shared a common culture. It was to be worked out within a familiar framework, that body of international tradition which brought together, in precarious equilibrium it is true, vague survivals of a Christendom which men hardly knew was lost, a recognition of self-interest as after all the dominating motive in diplomacy and an acceptance, fatal to the future, of absolute national sovereignty. Within that framework by which alone we must judge them, they did a good job. They did not see that they were trying to merge irreconcilables. We see that today. It is just one of the factors which accentuates the problem. No familiar framework like that of 1919 exists today. Every culture, every stage in what we call progress from African Congo to the Thames, the Potomac, the Indus, the Yangtse presents its claims. Global war means global peace. Freedom for Americans means freedom for Chinese and Malays and Indians,—and what about those dwellers by the Congo? What common standard is there over this vast world? The voice of God is so easily unheard. The light that lighteth every man is so easily screened from sight. The task is appalling.

All the more, therefore, it calls upon the faith of Christians, the faith which drives to thinking and to working. The Churches have officially been

doing well—Malvern, Delaware, the World Alliance, the Commission to study the organization of Peace, a host of statements from leaders, British, American and others. These all supplement the steady work which is being done under the auspices of the government along lines laid down by Wallace, Welles and others in the spirit of the Atlantic Charter, and the work of secular organizations like the League of Nations Association, the Council for Democracy, the more far-sighted labor groups and the like.

That is all to the good. All to the good are the pledges of the leaders of the United Nations. But the problems are vast and novel. The opposition to any such world order will grow more plausible, more vehement and *more insidious* as the end of the war draws near. Latent imperialism, relics of isolationism, the industrial interests which see only short term profits and the kind of dull inertia, the slipping back from high aspirations such as we knew in 1919 and 1920—these in America alone constitute formidable threats.

The Churches officially see pretty clearly. But the summons is to all of us to do something about it, to make our Christianity count in the definition of goals, to crusade for the common man, the simple folk. In the long run success depends upon us and people like us, men and women who are ready to transmute their Christmas hope into a dynamic and world-moving faith.

E. L. P.

The Churches in Council

UNUSUAL importance attaches to at least five actions of the recent biennial meeting of the Federal Council of Churches at Cleveland.

Would this first large gathering of official representatives of American Protestantism since Pearl Harbor be able to utter any clear word of guidance to a spiritually confused nation? The answer was given in two strong declarations—the biennial message on "The State of the Church" and a measured but unequivocal analysis of "The Issues at Stake in the War." Determined opposition to the latter by political isolationists could muster less than a dozen negative votes.

Mounting efforts by Roman Catholic officialdom to exclude Protestantism from Latin America were met by a restrained but classic affirmation of the principles of "Religious Freedom."

Insistence that steps must be taken to succour our starving Allies in subjugated Europe was em-

bodied in a resolution introduced by Dr. Henry Sloane Coffin.

Most far reaching of all, the Council met in joint session with representatives of seven other national interdenominational agencies, and moved forward

toward their early unification in The North American Council of Churches.

Each of these actions merits careful study. To several of them we shall return for more extended comment in later issues.

H. P. V. D.

A Basis of Christian Cooperation

BARBARA WARD

The Natural Law

WHEN at the Reformation, the unity of Europe was split at the high level of dogma and church allegiance, the division did not at first rend Western civilization in two. An enormous amount remained in common between Catholic and Protestant Europe and between their extensions into the New World. Catholics, of whom I am one, would argue that the unity which persisted depended upon the unity that was lost; for as man depends on God, and fallen nature upon grace, the maintenance of a truly human order ultimately depends upon the maintenance of a supernatural order as well. The important thing here however is the degree of unity which lasted beyond the sixteenth century and was the foundation and cement of the most ambitious structure man has ever built—Western civilization.

Its basis was the natural law. The age of science—which has practically seen the disappearance of all general appreciation of the natural law—nevertheless throws a great light upon it. All the achievements of our material civilization are built up on a simple act of faith, which can be proved to a high degree of probability but for which logicians assure us, there is no absolute proof. This affirmation is that like causes have like effects. To give a simple example, modern warfare would be impossible if the behavior of steel could not be predicted. The modern scientist knows the way in which his materials behave, be they plants, metals or the basic components of matter. The patterns of their behavior are scientific laws, laws of nature. A “scientific world view” would be impossible if the whole of the material universe did not conform to law.

Christians believe that the laws which govern the behavior of created things are the ideas in God's mind in creating them. “In the beginning was the Word,” the Logos, the Greek form, the Platonic archetype. The universe is rational because it reflects the mind of its Creator. Man, the summit of the created universe, is also bound by the law of his being, for God created him according to a certain idea—as we know “in His own image.” Man's pattern of behavior is fixed in the mind of

God. The natural law, subjectively and objectively, reflects God's purpose in creating man. Subjectively, it is the law of conscience, the consciousness of right and wrong; objectively, it is justice, the laws governing the behavior of man in society. All great civilizations have reflected more or less clearly the natural law, not only in the similarity of the moral system taught by their greatest men and in the obscure conscientiousness of millions of men and women, but in the universal recognition of a law which since it is held to reflect the will of God—or of heaven or of destiny—transcends human ordinances and which is the yardstick of their validity. Even in China, which of all great civilizations appears to have been least conscious of God, the Emperor yearly dedicated the ordering of his kingdom to the way of heaven—a ceremony which symbolized the dependence of human laws upon a transcendent and eternal order.

The Law of Conscience

The distinction between laws of nature and the natural law is the distinction between man and all other created things. Laws of nature are not violated. The plant does not grow backwards to the root. The combination H_2O cannot be anything but water. The natural law can be violated because men have free will and can choose or not to fulfill the pattern God had in mind at their creation. They can choose to sin and they can choose to build or to tolerate societies that are unjust. The knowledge of this choice has been “the grandeur and servitude” of European civilization. For centuries, it preserved it from the fatalism into which other great cultures have fallen; but it placed a fearful load on the human conscience. When in recent centuries this haunting sense of personal responsibility was sloughed off, a sense of relief was an undoubted result at first; but it entailed the return to serving “the weak and needy elements,” the return of fatalism, the return finally of despair.

But for a time in post-Reformation Europe, every one—Catholic and Protestant—believed in the necessity of good personal conduct. They hun-

gered for righteousness or admitted that they were sinners. The conception of sin and of personal responsibility for sin was at the roots of man's consciousness. The concept of good and evil entailed genuine, personal decisions. Conscience guided conduct or gave its owner a fore-taste of hell. The law of right and wrong, the law of personal ethics, the law of conscience, "graven on the fleshy tablets of the heart," gave Europe a common consciousness (or which was maybe even more important, a unified subconsciousness.)

Constitutional Government

The maintenance of unity was less obvious but still profound in the sphere of justice; the division between Calvinist and Catholic was not so great as that between both of them and the Lutherans, who believing that there could be no correspondence between the will of God and a corrupted human justice, and believing more in the terrible power and majesty of God than in His justice, cut off the heavenly from the earthly kingdom and handed over the civil order to the arbitrary power of the sovereign.

The historical shape of Reformation and counter-Reformation divided the Calvinist from the Catholic in the sphere of justice and the natural law. The Catholics had relied on the sovereigns to maintain them and for the next centuries, altar and throne were bound together in the magnificent but brief flowering of Baroque. In the Protestant lands the connection was fainter. In the new lands of America, it was faintest of all. But the struggle between Catholic and Protestant was not between lawlessness and law, between arbitrary and legal government. It was between two increasingly different principles of legitimacy, monarchic and democratic.* Vittoria, the Spanish Jesuit, preceded Grotius, the Dutch Calvinist, in drawing up a code of international law. Slavery was forbidden in the Spanish and Brazilian colonies in the New World on the declaration of the moral theologians that slavery was incompatible with the "glorious freedom of the sons of God." It is significant that when Britain in the seventeenth and France in the eighteenth century fought against royal absolutism, they did so in the name of a law which they had enjoyed in the past. The Commons appealed to then "ancient rights" against Charles I. The French monarchy was compelled to *re-summon* the States General. It was then obvious in both cases that the reformers were appealing to a legal and constitutional system which they felt they had enjoyed in the Middle Ages and which the kings, one

Protestant, one Catholic, were violating. But even absolute monarchy was not totalitarian. I might be arbitrary and despotic but it operated within a framework of law, upheld by the Church and by custom. It is absurd to call Hitlerism "a return to medieval barbarism." The rule of the Middle Ages was constitutional. In Bracton's words, "The king is below God and the law."

The American colonists were drawing on the natural law, inherited from the Christian centuries, when they wrote the Declaration of Independence. (I have even heard it said the Jefferson's thought at the time of drafting the Declaration was influenced by the writings of St. Robert Bellarmine.) The Constitution recognizes that popular sovereignty is limited by law. Not even the most absolute majority shall be in a position to violate the just rights of the citizen. Against a majority as against a monarch, he is to have the redress of law. In a secularized form, the rights of man and the "liberty, equality and fraternity" of the French Revolution were still part of the great tradition. These inalienable rights were said to be part of the nature of man; they were an abstract, as it were, of the natural law.

The New Economics

The real rifts in Europe begin with the weakening of the natural law. Though the roots go back in time, it was during the nineteenth century that three different attacks converged on the old ideas of order and morals and justice. One came from the new economics. The natural law for man with its possibility of choice—and so, of good and evil—was replaced by a fixed "scientific" law of the natural harmony of interests. Let each pursue his own ends and order and happiness would emerge. But what ends? Gain and ambition? As the century advanced, the survival of the fittest, a law deduced from the evolution of subrational beings, took the place of natural harmony, to justify the autonomy of economic law. In this way, a whole area of human behavior, with all its personal and social consequences, was withdrawn from the area of free choice and moral responsibility, and placed in the area of immutable scientific law. The split in the Christian conscience was absolute.

The Marxist Dialectic

The next attack came from the Marxist dialectic. If religion, philosophy, art, institutions, and justice reflected the basic economic and technical processes of the age, then clearly universal justice or laws of right and wrong were meaningless. There could be Roman justice, or feudal justice, or capitalist

* This question is brilliantly discussed in Guglielmo Ferrero's *The Principles of Power* (Putnam).

justice, or socialist justice—but no Justice. And since the processes of life were entirely conditioned, personal righteousness had no meaning. The dialectic has this truth in it that each age is profoundly influenced by the structure of society when it comes to define the particular content of the natural law. This adulteration of the lasting principle by the expressed fact creates an area of indeterminacy—which is also an area of growth. But to say that for example the Christian conception of family rights in the Middle Ages differs from the Christian conception today is not at all the same thing as to maintain that the family is a bourgeois, property-rotten institution. The area of indeterminacy complicates the task of those who collaborate on the basis of the natural law. It does not make the task completely fruitless.

National Sovereignty

Finally there is the attack launched by the “sovereign” national state. The claim of the nation state to gather to itself all the right and privileges which belong both to its citizens and to its neighbor states is not confined to Germany. It is the universal sin of Europe. But Nazism is its most horrible and extreme form. Here the state, in the name of the national group or race, claims absolute authority. “I am the law,” says Hitler. There is no more universal pattern, only the rule of the strongest—“humanity begins to prey upon itself, like monsters from the deep.”

The Tower of Babel

We are living today in the chaos which has followed the collapse of European unity. Our civilization is a tower of Babel without an interpreter's house. In our personal lives the old responsibility, born of the consciousness of good and evil and the fact of choice, is gone. Externally men are conditioned by environment, internally by the subconscious. Man created “a little lower than the angels” has slipped unhappily down into the arbitrary uncontrollable condition of inanimate things.

The symbol of his servitude is the new totalitarian state in which his rights and freedoms are extinguished and the conception of justice is replaced by the will to power of the dominant clique. In this world order, which at the level both of individual behavior and of state action, so grossly violates the pattern of freedom and order preordained by God, that those who, whether Catholic, Anglican, Free Churchmen, remain faithful to the concept of personal responsibility and immutable justice have a sure foundation and a very large field in which to work—especially in Britain and the United States

where what is best in the democratic system is grounded in the tradition of the natural law. If Christian people come together with the purpose of deepening their understanding of this common tradition, of discussing together its implications for the society in which they live, of creating informed and active citizens bent on restoring a society in harmony with the divine pattern, can it be doubted that mutual confidence and far greater political social and economic effectiveness will be the result?

With the founding of *The Sword of the Spirit and Religion and Life* in Britain, a first step has been taken at an official organizational level. In the prisons and concentration camps and underground movements of Europe, we have evidence that a new brotherhood is being forged in danger and agony and death. The drawing together must become a world wide process—a crusade such as Pope Pius XII called for, of “all men of good will” to bring mankind back “from the broken cisterns of material interests to the living fountains of divine justice,” from the individual and collective pursuit of pleasure and the individual and collective pursuit of power to the ordering of society according to the natural law. In this crusade, Christians would be working to save the image of man as he was created from the inhuman forces that tear him down. And if unity at the level of creation can be restored, unity of redemption and revelation will be easier to seek.

A Sense of Belonging

THE Selective Service Act gives exemption from military service to us ministerial students. None of us asked for this exemption. However, since it is ours most of us feel that our greatest responsibility in the existing national emergency is to prepare ourselves after college with three years of training in seminary. This is the minimal training necessary to qualify us to serve our church, community, and country in these days.

As students of post-graduate age with military exemption, we find ourselves in a position not wholly desirable. Admittedly, our group is divided. There are some among us who have taken and are maintaining humbly and sincerely what is known as the “pacifist” position. This segment of our group has come in for more than its share of criticism—being called unrealistic, obstructionist, and similarly criticized from within and without the Church.

These pacifists have my respect. Yes, even more, I envy them. Accused by their critics of being confused, I find many of them to be less confused than I am. They have taken a position based on strong conviction. They know where they stand with rela-

tion to the war effort. Let the world call them names, they can look back squarely in the eye and defend their position. Thus these pacifists among the current crop of ministerial students maintain their integrity and self-respect.

Alas, we non-pacifist students, free to remain in school while most of our college friends are either in training for or actually in military service, are confused. We cannot take the pacifist position. As a matter of fact, by the very nature of our situation we are left without a position. Here we are, a group of able-bodied young men sequestered on a university campus while the fellows with whom we played tennis, sat in chemistry class, argued in bull sessions just last year or the year before are in military camps here or abroad doing the dirty work to win this war.

Recently a friend, who will return to Union Theological Seminary this fall for his second year, remarked that it took all he had to stay in school last year. He had not lived through a day without anguish. Every time he went downtown the soldiers and sailors milling around Times Square on leave reminded him painfully of his loose relationship with our country's war effort.

During the past year I have lived in a booming defense city. Nearby at least 25,000 soldiers are in training. Often these soldiers have jostled me gently with such queries as, "Where's the khaki, Buddy?" I could not stop to explain my civilian clothes, to explain that the government had seen fit to place me in Class IV-D and that I would not be called into service. I would not have wanted to give that explanation had there been time available. I passed on with a feeble grin, wishing with all my heart that I could give a pertinent reply.

Well, why not volunteer? Do not imagine that my Union friend and I have not considered that choice. But we men who have determined to prepare ourselves for the ministry are something of an odd lot. Our lives unquestionably reflect more than average selfless concern. We plan to enter a field of service where the greater good is determinative. We simply must have seminary training to be useful ministers. Our decision to get that training now is strengthened by our perception of the colossal demands of the post-war period upon the Church. We shall be in a worse predicament then, if we are without seminary training.

There is a way out. The government has in operation at the present time several plans allowing men in college and medical students to finish school before entering active service. This type of program has one outstanding feature. It makes it possible for men to join the Army or Navy while in school. Thus they have a position in relation to the war

effort; they belong. The military authorities have sanctioned their present course, and in the pursuit of their training they can feel that they are doing their part. Why cannot we prospective chaplains be given the same consideration? Probably the most direct answer is that we have not asked for it.

Here is the outline of a plan which would give us, who are now on the outside of the war effort with scarcely a window through which to look, a badly needed sense of belonging.

The first-year men of the country's seminaries could be asked to volunteer as Volunteer Chaplain Candidates. The Army or Navy could select a qualified group to be given basic training for three months during the coming summer. The men selected would train along with the regular trainees, with the same rank or grade, receiving the same pay. Released from active duty in September they would return to their schools for the second year. The military training would continue for three months during the second summer. At the end of this second training period, all VCC's would know at least something of the Army or Navy, learned the hard way. The military authorities could eliminate VCC's at the end of either training period. Some of the men, after undergoing training, might find themselves unqualified to serve as chaplains. They could be given discharges. At the end of the second training period the men qualified could apply formally for commissions as chaplains and upon graduation be assigned to Chaplains' School.

Thus the Army or Navy would have available in 1945, and each year thereafter that the plan was followed, a carefully selected group of men who would not have to start from scratch in the chaplaincy. And just as important, the government would have provided these men a training program designed to make them an integral part of the nation's war effort. This the prevailing situation does not provide.

The details of the proposed program are incidental. That such a program be provided is imperative—in the opinion of one prospective VCC.

MALLARY FITZPATRICK, JR.

Authors in This Issue

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The World Church: News and Notes

Persecution of Jews in Norway

The Nazi persecution of the Jews has come to Norway last of all the occupied countries because of the small number of Jews in Norway. A Christian protest signed by Swedish bishops reads as follows: "With abhorrence and alarm we learn how heathen race-hatred, which has spread like a plague over one country after the other, has now broken out near us on our own Scandinavian peninsula with its disquieting acts of violence. The people are being subjected to the greatest sufferings not because they have been found guilty of crimes by the due processes of law. On the whole, they have not been accused of breaking any law. They are being made to suffer only because they, as a result of their ancestry, belong to a certain race. Deeply moved, we have listened to the sober and Christian exhortation which our oppressed sister church has sent to those who hold the power in Norway, appealing to them not to go against the word of God by introducing race hatred and violence. It is our duty as Christians and as men to do all we can to help these unfortunate victims of this hate. Even if we cannot do much to help the distressed, we can and ought always to bear them and their distress in mind. We bishops of the Swedish Church, in the name of God, urge and call upon all our fellow Christians in Sweden, when praying daily to our Father in heaven for the many sufferings in this time of violence and devastation, individually or collectively, to include fervent and persistent prayers for our tortured brothers of the tribe of Israel."

Resistance to Tyranny by Dutch

A Nazi paper in Holland gives striking testimony to the power and courage of the resistance of Dutch Christians to Nazi tyranny. The paper declares: "The results of National-Socialist propaganda in Holland are not satisfactory and do not concur with the efforts made. The success of this propaganda is small not because the propaganda is done wrongly, but because it is hindered, especially in the country, by the Church, which injects the population every week with its own propaganda. This weekly injection delivered by the clergyman makes the population inaccessible to new ideas."

"In _____*, where the population is 60 per cent Protestant, the campaign is greater than elsewhere. As chief editor of the National-Socialist paper," says the writer, "I saw that the majority of the anonymous letter-writers are rigorous church-goers and write the meanest and most fanatical letters."

"Some months ago Pastor _____, of _____, was arrested for repeatedly preaching a most anti-German gospel. He urged hoarding and sabotage because he said that otherwise those people who were playing soldiers would eat up the food. He prayed for a bad harvest. Now his successor is no better. His first sermon dealt

with the letter of consolation to Timothy from the imprisoned St. Paul.

"Recently Pastor _____, of _____, prayed, 'Lord help Christian teachers if they refuse to accept the new devilish doctrine.' He prays every Sunday that the Lord will protect those who are persecuted for the sake of Justice. He appealed for strength for 'the beloved one' and for her return to her people.

"At _____ a series of sermons were announced entitled 'The Church on the Offensive.' We begin to realize which offensive this is, when we read the titles of the first sermons of this series which so crowded the church that hundreds were obliged to stand. In the first service, Pastor _____, of _____, spoke about 'Our Life in Distress.' He declared that man has come to a spiritual deadlock. Many solutions have been suggested, but the only salvation is in the Church. The second clergyman declared that the Bible offers the only solution for the world. The third clergyman said, 'We are surrounded by dark forces. Struggle means opposition which is often very fierce.'

"If every week in thousands of parishes God's help is implored for the 'Beloved' and the persecuted, how is it possible to make the people accept other ideas? They identify Germany with the Godless, the ex-Queen with the persecuted and those who will one day be redeemed by God, and National-Socialism with devilish confusion and temptation into which the poor people are being led."

Polish Protestants Oppressed

It has become apparent that the Nazi authorities regard Evangelical Christians in Germany as inevitably belonging to the German racial stock which must be purified and reclaimed. The Evangelical Church of Poland has therefore become simply an instrument of the Gestapo. Dr. J. Bursche, the former head of the Polish Evangelical Church, has been arrested and a Pastor Kleindienst has been made head of the church, directly under the supervision of the German authorities. The Protestant Church is so completely under the influence of National Socialism that the devout Christians have completely absented themselves from the church. Both Dr. Bursche and his brother, the dean of the faculty of Protestant Theology at Warsaw, were placed in concentration camps. The dean died in 1940.

Future Relations With Germany

The Archbishop of Canterbury in a recent sermon defined the attitude toward Germany as follows:

"There ought to be such expression of the moral condemnation of recent German policy as cannot fail to bring home to the German people what is the moral judgment of the world concerning them. On the other hand, there must in the long-term policy be provision that the coming generations shall be able to recog-

* Identity of persons and towns withheld.

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A Bi-Weekly Journal of Christian Opinion

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nize the position given to them in the world as fair. . . .

"But Christians at any rate, and indeed civilized men generally, cannot be content to treat one great member of the family of nations as quite distinct from all the others standing over against them. We must look forward to renewed fellowship, and consequently while the settlement is bound to be such as will appear severe to the German State, it must also be such as secures to the ordinary German citizen of future generations an even chance of sharing in the benefits of civilization with his neighbors, provided his State is itself behaving as a good neighbor among them.

"Beyond that we shall need all the cultural ties and associations that are possible to build up again mutual understanding, and especially we must try to strengthen all those means of fellowship which unite the Christians of Germany with their fellow Christians in other countries. . . ."

Message of World's Student Christian Federation

A group of Christian students representing six different countries met at Presinge, near Geneva, from September 2 to 4, 1942, for a Conference of the World's Student Christian Federation. It issued a message from which we quote the following passages:

"The foundation of law—The problem of law is perhaps the most fundamental of all those which present themselves to us; what are the Biblical bases of law and justice?

"We see with horror today on the continent of Europe what a world without law is like. Arbitrary sentences, mass deportation, violation of the right of sanctuary—all reveal the abyss into which will soon sink a world where law exists only to serve the ends of the strongest.

"The complete upheaval of the whole tradition of the continent, the heritage of a civilization interpenetrated by Christianity faces us with a problem very different from that of the Anglo-Saxon countries. There the already existing standards of value survive, and men's duty is to keep their life in the level of those standards. But for us all the standards known as Christian have given way in the war. In the face of a rising anarchy, solid foundations must be found.

"We feel that for a post-Christian world like Europe the consequences of the destruction of human standards of value is much more serious than for a world that has never known Christianity. There is no salvation for Europe but in a return to the real origin of those standards.

"Human suffering—Certain countries today are undergoing sufferings which can scarcely be imagined or conceived by those who are not exposed to them. When these sufferings are accepted as a trial sent by God (Hebrews 12:11), they have a purifying effect. We have seen Christian Churches fortified and purified by persecution. We have even seen nations without any Christian faith attaining, in the crucible of suffering, a quite new unity and solidarity. In this connection too we may speak of the purifying effect of suffering.

"It is evident, however, that suffering does not necessarily bring us nearer God. On the contrary, we know that it can produce a terrible hardening of heart. The most terrible thing in the crisis through which Europe is passing is that this suffering seems so indiscriminate. We see young people who have lost any sense of the value of human life.

"We realize that the future will depend very largely on the fruit borne by the present suffering. We see too, that the different reactions to this suffering will make mutual understanding very difficult. Those who have suffered most will have the first rights when the moment comes to rebuild Europe. . . ."

I. C. P. I. S. Geneva.

Rumanian Patriarch Resigns

The Rumanian Patriarch, Nicodemus, resigned his office as primate of the Rumanian Orthodox Church at the end of October. It is now learned that the Metropolitan of Sibiu who succeeded him has also resigned. Some obscure difficulties with the Fascist government of Atonescu. Nicodemus had been following the German line fairly well and had been embodying the part of the Russian Church which exists in the territory assigned to Rumania into the Rumanian Church. One great problem of the Orthodox Church in the Balkans has arisen from Stalin's letter to the Patriarch Sergius of Moscow, which Russian propaganda has been using to prove that Russia is not anti-Christian any longer and which Axis propaganda uses as proof of the bankruptcy of bolshevism. Whatever its significance, it does reveal the problem of the Orthodox Church: its undue reliance upon and too intimate association with the state. The new situation in Russia may mean that Stalin will recognize the Church increasingly in order to use it as a counter-weight in Balkan politics.

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